

*Motions***POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY**

**The Hon. ROD ROBERTS:** I move:

That private members' business item No. 708 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The Hon. ROD ROBERTS (11:33:20):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) Police Remembrance Day is on 29 September 2020 and is the day that police and the community stop and pay honour to those police officers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting the citizens of New South Wales;
  - (b) Police Remembrance Day coincides with the 100 year anniversary of the founding of the NSW Police Association, the trade union representing members of the NSW Police Force; and
  - (c) due to COVID-19 restrictions it will not be possible to conduct this ceremony under normal conditions and this sombre occasion will therefore be conducted virtually, conforming to Public Health Orders.
- (2) That this House calls on the Government to support the application by the NSW Police Association for a light display to be projected onto the sails of the Opera House on 29 September 2020 in recognition of the lives given in the service of this State by brave men and women of the NSW Police Force.

Next Tuesday 29 September is Police Remembrance Day, which holds special meaning for all police officers throughout Australia. It is the day for us all to pause to honour the officers who have lost their lives in the performance of their duties. It is a day when we are reminded of not only the dangers of policing but also the dedication and professionalism of the outstanding women and men of the NSW Police Force. It is a time to reflect on the role of our police. They enforce our laws, making it safe for us to go about our work, participate in family life, practice our beliefs and move around this State. Their efforts allow us to live freely.

Their work is unrelenting, often silent and unseen. They are on the frontline 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Our police run towards the dangers that we run from. That is their duty and they do it on a daily basis without question or thought for their own physical or psychological wellbeing. They are there at all our natural and non-natural disasters—fires, floods, storms and now the pandemic, which could potentially cripple the State. The sight of a police uniform brings comfort to our law-abiding citizens and fear to those who choose to not live within our same community values. Most importantly, Police Remembrance Day is the day to honour those heroes in the NSW Police Force who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect us and hold our communities together. It is a day to pay our respects and remember also their loved ones, to whom they meant so much and who have lost so much.

Currently 274 police officers are acknowledged on the New South Wales Honour Roll. We owe them and their loved ones an eternal debt of gratitude. Thankfully, in times of tragedy the NSW Police Legacy steps up to care for those families. Currently there are 1,264 police legatees. NSW Police Legacy is a charity for the police family established in 1987. It provides professional and compassionate support for police legatees, who are the partners, children and parents of police officers who have sadly passed. That is achieved through the provision of meaningful benefits, services, advocacy and educational grants to young children. It ensures that the children of our deceased officers are provided with the best opportunities to succeed in life whatever direction they pursue. I commend its work to the House.

On many occasions throughout my career I witnessed acts of selfless bravery and honourable conduct, placing many of my friends and colleagues in danger with numerous near-misses, not just physically but psychologically as well. It would be uncommon for any police officer to not have been touched personally by the death or serious injury of a colleague at some time during their careers. Some members may know a member of my staff, Gary Lockton. Gary is a former police officer like myself. Two of his workmates died while working for the State Drug Crime Commission in 1988. Constables First Class Craig Zucchetti and Mark Burns died on 16 March and 17 March respectively after a devastating motor vehicle accident in the Tamworth area.

My wife, Lynette, also a former serving police officer, lost a close friend and colleague during a special weapons and operations training exercise when Detective Constable First Class Bradley McNamara died on 31 October 1991. This year's Police Remembrance Day coincides with the centenary of the founding of the Police Association of NSW, the trade union representing members of the NSW Police Force and their families. The association works tirelessly for the men and women of the police force. Currently it is campaigning to secure the promised wage rise for its members. The union represents the professional and industrial interests of approximately 16,500 members, covering all ranks of sworn police officers in New South Wales.

In most years there are numerous ceremonies across the State. However those ceremonies will be reduced this year because of COVID-19 restrictions. The commissioner will host a Police Remembrance Day ceremony at the NSW Police memorial wall in the Domain. However, it will not be open to the public or the wider police community. The names of New South Wales police officers who have lost their lives while performing their duties are etched in the memorial wall. For that reason, I note the support of both the Government and the police Minister David Elliott for the Police Association of NSW's application for a memorial light display.

It will be projected onto the sails of our internationally recognised Opera House on the evening of 29 September in recognition of the lives given in the service by the brave men and women of the NSW Police Force. The gesture will not be lost on current serving officers, former officers and the families of police in the State. I commend the Government and the Minister for their support. I encourage members of the House and the wider community to take time on the day to reflect on the sacrifices of the men and women of the NSW Police Force. On 29 September this year, I will take some time during my day to thank all New South Wales police officers, past and present, for ensuring the safety, freedom and way of life for myself and my family.

**The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (11:39:16):** I support the motion moved by the Hon. Rod Roberts on behalf of the Government. I commend the member for bringing this important matter to the House. Each year 29 September marks National Police Remembrance Day, which commemorates the service and sacrifice of our police officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It is a day to pause and reflect on the sacrifice of those officers, whose work is often perilous and unpredictable. Sadly, I have firsthand experience of the death of an officer who has dedicated their life to protecting us all. My cousin was a police officer whose close colleague, Senior Constable Glenn McEnallay, was killed while on duty in 2002. Senior Constable McEnallay was posthumously awarded the Commissioner's Valour Award.

I saw the impact on my cousin and his family—it was devastating. My cousin, an officer who had planned on a long career in policing, was so deeply shaken by Glenn's death that he could not bring himself to put the uniform on again. He left the police shortly thereafter. Our officers are unsung heroes. They and their colleagues in emergency and health services have been at the front line during this most challenging year as we have dealt with the virulence of COVID-19. As we have seen in recent times, police in the country have played an integral role along the State's borders, helping to protect us from the pandemic. It can be a challenging task for officers who live in smaller towns and do not have the anonymity of city police. The sacrifices and support given by the families of our NSW Police Force is enormous and immeasurable and forms part of the fabric of our community.

On Police Remembrance Day this year, the sails of the Sydney Opera House will light up in blue and white checks in remembrance of the fallen and to celebrate a profession that deserves our community's respect, support and gratitude. In light of this decision by the Opera House Trust, I have suggested, and the Hon. Rod Roberts has agreed, that it is appropriate for me to move an amendment. I move:

That the question be amended by omitting paragraph (2) and inserting instead:

- (d) on 29 September 2020 a light display will be projected onto the sails of the Opera House in recognition of the lives given in the service of this State by brave men and women in the NSW Police Force.

I commend the motion to the House.

**The Hon. MICK VEITCH (11:42:08):** I support the motion moved by the Hon. Rod Roberts and I commend him for bringing it forward. At the outset I express my condolences to the families and friends who have lost loved ones. When you walk past the wall, it is a salient reminder of the grief so many families have suffered over time. I extend my appreciation to the Government for accepting the initiative. It is an appropriate measure to take during the COVID-19 pandemic when people will not be able to attend the wall. I also extend my appreciation to the President of the Police Association Tony King and Secretary Pat Gooley. We should also reflect upon those who were presiding members at the beginning of the Police Association—the first secretary, Betram Forescue, and the first president, Thomas Pauling. I doubt that one hundred years ago they would have contemplated where the association would be today. I bring the country perspective to this discussion. Everyone in regional New South Wales knows their local police officers. Sometimes that is good and sometimes that is bad, but you know your local police officers.

**The Hon. Rod Roberts:** Only good in your instance.

**The Hon. MICK VEITCH:** I acknowledge the interjection by the honourable member. Absolutely! The local police officers do a fantastic job. As the Minister suggested, they do not enjoy anonymity in their communities. Their presence and everything they do is quite visible. When a police officer is lost in often dramatic and drastic circumstances, it impacts the whole community. The grief is palpable for everyone. It is a terrible thing to experience. We should also reflect upon the fact that policing is a difficult, stressful and physically demanding

job. Often it causes long-term impacts such as post-traumatic stress. We need to spend a lot more time encouraging police officers to reach out and seek support as their mental health is extremely important.

As the Minister suggested, often they leave the force not feeling so well and often after not achieving the goals they set when first entering the police force. That ill-feeling lingers for quite some time. I have a mate who is a former police officer and he struggles from time to time. He is lucky he has a close-knit group of men around him to help him through those difficult times. I commend the motion to the House. I commend the amendment from the Government. My thoughts are with all of those families and communities who have lost loved ones while performing their duty.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN (11:45:18):** I acknowledge the fine nature of the motion that has been moved by the Hon. Rod Roberts. On 8 March 2012 I returned to Tamworth for a tragic event: the funeral of Dave Rixon. Dave was killed on 2 March 2012. The impact of the death of any individual is traumatic. But we had the death of an officer who was 40 years of age. He had spent 22 years in the NSW Police Force and was leaving behind his wife Fiona—who I knew—and their six children. The grief was palpable. There were too many people to be in the church. Many of us were outside. It was a difficult day.

Dave was a traffic cop who I had known for some time. Unlike many, after 22 years of service as a cop he had remained a decent bloke. If he gave evidence, we would get close to the end and I would think we're not going to get anywhere there. Dave was a decent man and he was prepared to give evidence in a way that was unaffected, honest and trustworthy. On 2 March at 7.30 in the morning Dave sought to stop a car in Lorraine Street, West Tamworth and the murderer shot him. Dave had time to return fire four times. He even had time even to put the handcuff on one arm of the murderer before he succumbed to his wounds. It is tragic to go to work and suffer that outcome. No words can describe that experience for any family or community. I extend my sincere regards to his family and to all those officers who have suffered such a terrible fate.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (11:48:14):** I support the motion moved by the Hon. Rod Roberts and commend him for bringing this important matter to the House. On 29 September one of our national icons will be lit up to remember our fallen heroes as part of this year's Police Remembrance Day. The lighting up of the Opera House sails is one small way we as a State can show our support to the families and loved ones of the those police officers who have died in the course of their duties. We hope that this small gesture shows the community at large the esteem we hold our police officers in for undertaking an often thankless task of keeping our communities safe. It is fitting to have one national icon being the conduit to commemorate another.

In recent years we have seen our police officers rise to the challenge when faced with the worst bushfires in the history of our State, and they excelled. We have seen our police officers rise to the challenge when faced with the pandemic, whether it be through the border operation, the quarantine operation or general compliance enforcement; there, too, they have excelled. As the mental health Minister, I thank each and every one of them for the tireless work that they do, often with people who are having their worst day and are at their most vulnerable. In the NSW Police Force we truly have a rich heritage of excellence. On this Police Remembrance Day, I ask the community to take a moment to reflect on the danger that our police officers put themselves in for the benefit of our safety. As is often remarked, they run into danger as we escape it. To conclude, I put on the record my heartfelt congratulations to the Police Association of NSW for reaching its 100th anniversary. I commend the motion to the House. I also commend the honourable member for bringing it forward.

**The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (11:50:17):** I make a brief contribution to the motion from the Hon. Rod Roberts. I commend him for bringing such an important matter to the attention of the House. Police Remembrance Day is on 29 September this year. I offer my sincere condolences to the families of those police officers who get up and go to work as we all do, do incredible things on behalf of our community and never come home. Other speakers, including the Deputy President, have eloquently shared heartbreaking stories of the lifelong impact that loss has. I commend the Deputy President and others for sharing those experiences with us. This morning a colleague of mine reflected on a funeral that she attended. She was nearly brought to tears at the thought of the young son, who attended wearing his father's hat.

As members of Parliament we get to see those moments and those impacts, but we do not always feel them in the same way that families do. It is appropriate that we have a day and an icon like the Opera House, which will be lit up on that day, to remember that incredible sacrifice. As other speakers have said, police officers are people who get up every day, go to work and run into situations from which any normal person would want to run in the opposite direction. They sometimes see the very worst of humanity but they continue to turn up, day in and day out, to protect our community. I say thank you to those serving officers and to those who have served in the past. It would be remiss of me not to reflect on the 100th anniversary of the Police Association of NSW and give a shout-out to the incredible people who work there.

As a member of the Labor Party I respect the Police Association and the incredible density it has over its members. That is a testament to the work that it does. Kingy, Gooley and Beary are amazing in their advocacy and I pay tribute to that. It would be remiss of me not to mention the fact that over the past couple of months, as many of us have had the luxury of working from home, police officers and other emergency services have continued to go to work in the uncertainty of the COVID environment. They put themselves out there, continuing to protect our community. It is only fair that they receive a pay rise. I wish the Police Association and the police officers the very best in their campaign as it is pursued through the Industrial Relations Commission. I commend the motion to the House and I look forward to it being supported.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (11:53:25):** I speak in support of the motion and thank the Hon. Rod Roberts for bringing it to the House. It is always important to acknowledge those who have lost their lives in the line of duty when serving our citizens. At this time in our history it is more important than ever. In the majority of towns and suburbs around Australia, you will find a memorial to a police officer or officers who have had their lives cut short. I particularly acknowledge the words of the Deputy President in showing the deep anguish and pain that that can cause regional communities. It stands as a universal reminder of how communities are touched by the work of the NSW Police Force and the important role that it plays in protecting us. I acknowledge the trauma that many officers who are left behind face when dealing with the loss of a colleague while on duty. I acknowledge the comments of the Leader of the Government in that space.

On 29 September we join with our neighbours in New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Solomon Islands to pay our respects to all police who have been killed on the job and to remember those who have passed away in other circumstances. COVID-19 has totally changed the way the world operates, but in New South Wales it has also shown how important our police men and women are. The pandemic has brought the role of the Police Force front and centre during the crisis. It has played a crucial role in hotel quarantine. It has enforced public health orders to protect the community and has enforced our borders. Police Commissioner Mick Fuller and his team have been utterly vital in updating the public at press conferences with the Premier and Chief Health Officer and keeping the confidence of our State. It would be fair to say that without the Police Force and its combined efforts in working with NSW Health in the face of the pandemic, we would not be in the position that we are in today. It is well known that our Police Force is absolutely fundamental to protecting the liberties of each and every citizen in the State, and to preserving and maintaining the societal structures upon which we all rely.

It is vital that the police continue to build relationships with individuals and organisations throughout the community so that every individual understands the vital role that they play. To that end, I commend the work of the PCYC, which started in 1937 as a small club through a collaboration with Rotary Australia and has grown to 64 clubs with over 100,000 members throughout New South Wales. The clubs are fantastic; they keep kids off the street and create a sense of purpose and belonging for young people. More importantly, they create an initial, immediate and vital link between the Police Force and young people who are at risk. They create that trust and understanding right from the get-go, which is critical. Our police play an integral role in our society in so many different ways, making our communities better and safer places to live. I thank them for their work, acknowledge their extraordinary service and remember all those who have lost their lives in protecting the citizens of New South Wales.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (11:56:29):** I support the motion of the Hon. Rod Roberts that recognises Police Remembrance Day, which will be marked on 29 September, as it is each and every year. Police Remembrance Day is an opportunity for us to commemorate the service and sacrifice of members of the NSW Police Force and police in other States and jurisdictions who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It is an important reminder of the continued dangers that police officers face each day when serving our community. In particular, this year we remember Constable Aaron Vidal, an officer at the Sydney City Police Area Command, who was travelling home after work earlier this year and was killed tragically in a vehicle accident. We also remember Leading Senior Constable Lynette Taylor, Senior Constable Kevin King, Constable Josh Prestney and Constable Glen Humphris, who were tragically killed in a car crash on Melbourne's Eastern Freeway in April, as members will remember. Glen Humphris was born on the Central Coast and moved to Melbourne four years ago with his partner.

He entered the Victorian police force less than 12 months prior to the incident that caused his passing. Anyone who saw the video of Constable Humphris being repatriated to the Central Coast was extremely moved by the vision of police officers standing alongside the Hume Highway as his hearse passed them. Four Victoria Police highway patrol vehicles escorted the hearse on its journey to Hovell Tree Park in Albury, where Victoria Police handed over duties to the NSW Police Force. Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton handed Constable Humphris' hat to NSW Police Force Deputy Commissioner Jeff Loy in a short repatriation ceremony before five New South Wales officers on motorbikes took over the escort. Finally, I welcome the call for the Government to support the application by the Police Association of NSW for a light display on the Opera House. I welcome and support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Government to recognise the lives given in

service of the State by the brave men and women of the NSW Police Force. In these times, when we are unable to conduct the usual ceremonies, it will be a good alternative form of acknowledgement. I commend the motion to the House.

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:58:55):** I thank the Hon. Rod Roberts for moving this important motion. Everyone deserves to go to work and come home safely. Every day we ask a lot of our police. We ask them to go into the community 24 hours a day, every day of the year, to see things that most of us never see and sometimes to experience the worst of people's behaviour. Labor members want all police who work to keep our communities safe to be able to do their jobs and return to their workmates and to their families at the end of the day.

The motion refers to the 100-year anniversary of the Police Association of NSW. I am pleased that the House will support a motion that supports a trade union, which has worked collectively for over 100 years for the betterment of its members, and that recognises the role of unions in improving safety standards and working conditions for our police officers. Often lip-service is given to issues such as this but largely it is the work of the unions that has advanced the pay, conditions and safety of police officers. I am pleased that the House will recognise that. I send my best regards to all members of the NSW Police Force. I also send my deepest condolences to all who have lost people in the line of duty, to all who are living with the consequences of that and to all police officers who have experienced violence and assault and ongoing mental health issues as a result of the tough job that we ask them to do every day.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! According to sessional order, proceedings are now interrupted for questions.

*Questions Without Notice*

#### **TEACHER SALARIES**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (12:00:56):** My question is directed to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning. Will the Minister advise the House of how many positions have been cut as part of the NSW Department of Education restructure?

**The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (12:01:12):** I thank the Hon. Adam Searle for his question, which asks about what is happening operationally with respect to the restructure of the Department of Education. I will take the question on notice, make inquiries of the secretary and other department staff, and come back to him with an answer.

#### **ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (12:01:40):** My question is addressed to the Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government has worked with Aboriginal businesses to strengthen their economic presence in this State?

**The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (12:01:52):** I thank the Hon. Shayne Mallard for his question and his undoubted interest in Aboriginal affairs. The Government acknowledges the effect of COVID on all businesses in the State. We have some way to go before we return to the economic health that we would all hope for. The Government is intent on growing the State's economy. Obviously as far as possible the recovery will be business-led, which means ensuring that we do what we can to grow Aboriginal businesses. I am pleased to advise the House that next month is Indigenous Business Month. This is the sixth year of running Indigenous business month and the theme is "invigorate, build and maintain to keep our sector strong". Indigenous Business Month recognises the resilience and innovation in the Aboriginal business sector. It seeks to highlight and acknowledge the work of those businesses as they respond creatively to some of the challenges that the year has presented.

In October the events and networking opportunities of Indigenous Business Month will be live-streamed to enable them to take place in a COVID-safe way, which is important. Our business advisory services have been adapted and strengthened to increase support for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and small businesspeople. In addition to the NSW Aboriginal Enterprise Development Officer program, which offers free advice to Aboriginal business people, the Business Connect program, with which my colleague the Hon. Damien Tudehope is familiar, employs Aboriginal business experts to provide specialist advice. I am delighted to report that the programs are working and are in high demand. In fact, in the past three years the number of Aboriginal businesses to which they provide services has increased by 30 per cent. Things are improving but we know there is more to do. I am delighted to take the opportunity of Indigenous business month to recognise and acknowledge the work of the Aboriginal business sector. Undoubtedly a strong Aboriginal business sector is an absolutely vital part of the closing the gap agenda. I say to all participants: All the best for Indigenous Business Month.

*Bills***STRONGER COMMUNITIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (COURTS AND CIVIL) BILL 2020****Messages**

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly agreeing to the Legislative Council's amendment to the bill.

*Motions***POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**The Hon. LOU AMATO (15:43:09):** I make a brief contribution to the Hon. Rod Roberts' important motion. A police officer's job is a dangerous one. Some people in our community have the misconception that a police officer's only danger is in the confrontation of criminals. Many of our brave police officers have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the apprehension of criminals and in the protection of the community. I had a look at the police Honour Roll and began to realise that police officers face many dangers in their duties. Police officers apprehend criminals but they also face the emotional toll of having to attend crime scenes and traffic accidents and basically witnessing tragedies that no-one should be faced with.

Many police officers face terrible trauma. I was saddened by the number of our police who have taken their own lives due to the stress of witnessing so much human tragedy. Many police officers have lost their lives in traffic accidents and many have died as a result of unspeakable violence. Only a police officer could understand the distress of being at constant risk of violence. Community support for our police is paramount. We want our police to know that we appreciate the work they do. Our police need our support just as we need them. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we are unable at this time to honour the fallen as in times past. I wholeheartedly support the Hon. Rod Roberts' motion for the NSW Police Association to conduct a light display that will be projected onto the sails of the Opera House on 29 September 2020 in recognition of the lives given in the service of this State by the brave men and women of the NSW Police Force.

**Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (15:44:37):** I am very pleased to support the motion moved by the Hon. Rod Roberts. We heard him speak earlier of his own years of service in the NSW Police Force. This motion comes very much from his heart and from his experience in the police force. The motion states, in part:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) Police Remembrance Day is on 29 September 2020 and is the day that police and the community stop and pay honour to those police officers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting the citizens of New South Wales

Those words remind me of the experience that my eldest son, Stephen, had in the NSW Police Force. I had two sons in the NSW Police Force, Stephen and David. [*Time expired.*]

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** Order! Pursuant to stand orders debate is interrupted to allow the mover of the motion to speak in reply.

**The Hon. ROD ROBERTS (15:46:21):** In reply: I thank the following members of this Chamber for the genuineness and sincerity of their contributions: the Leader of the Government, the Hon. Don Harwin; the Hon. Mick Veitch; the Hon. Bronnie Taylor; the Hon. Courtney Houssos; the Hon. Ben Franklin; the Hon. Taylor Martin; the Hon. Penny Sharpe; the Hon. Lou Amato; Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile; and, in particular, the Deputy President for his most heartfelt contribution. I will not go on; I will let those contributions from those members speak for themselves. I am certain the contributions are welcomed by the police family. I acknowledge and support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Government and I commend the motion to the House.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** The Hon. Rod Roberts has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Don Harwin has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

**Amendment agreed to.**

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

**Motion as amended agreed to.****COALMINING**

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (15:47:43):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) around 28,600 people are employed directly in the New South Wales coal industry;
  - (b) in 2018, 164.6 million tonnes of coal was exported from New South Wales;
  - (c) some 85 per cent of the coal mined in New South Wales is exported, mainly to Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan, where it is used mostly for electricity generation;
  - (d) New South Wales exports of coal represents only around 3 per cent of global coal consumption; and
  - (e) in 2018-19 coal brought in around \$2 billion in royalties revenue in New South Wales which is used to fund public services and infrastructure.
- (2) That this House recognises that coal mining for export in New South Wales will continue to play a role in supporting other nations to provide electricity access for their citizens into the future.

Coalmining has been a major part of the New South Wales economy ever since a permanent convict outpost was established on the Hunter River in 1804. Originally, coal was used just for domestic heating and cooking, but by the second half of the 1800s it was used to power the railroads and the steamships. Now, coal is the largest export earner for New South Wales in value terms, worth around \$23.1 billion in the financial year 2018-19. That was greater than the value of our tourism and education exports combined in that financial year. I suggest that the difference would be even starker in the coming financial year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the motion states, 28,600 people are employed directly in the New South Wales coal industry. In addition, almost 114,000 people would be indirectly employed and, despite all the subsidies for renewable energy and despite wind and solar tripling its share of the energy mix in the past five years, just over 7 per cent of our electricity now comes from those two sources compared with coal, which generates almost 80 per cent of our State's electricity, as detailed in the NSW Electricity Strategy.

In 2018-19 coalmining also contributed approximately \$2 billion in royalties revenue to New South Wales. This money is used to pay for the schools that our students learn in and for our hospitals and our health system—which has become especially important since the COVID-19 pandemic began. This money is also used to build roads, fund our public transport and all the other public services and infrastructure we have in this State. Any member considering opposing this motion should name what the alternative revenue sources would be. New South Wales exports 85 per cent of the coal mined in the State. This coal goes to Japan, South Korea, China and Taiwan as well as many other nations. Notwithstanding the impact of COVID-19, demand for coal is likely to remain relatively stable in the medium term. According to the International Energy Agency, worldwide demand for coal for power generation reached an all-time high in 2018.

Coal demand in south-east Asia is forecast to grow by more than 5 per cent each year. India is investing heavily in renewables, doubling wind generation and quadrupling solar photovoltaics by 2024. Yet coal demand for power generation in India is still forecast to grow by 4.6 per cent each year. People are being pulled out of poverty and Third World countries are improving their living standards and it is New South Wales coal that is helping them do that. The Global Energy Monitor showed that in July this year a total of 2,452 coal-fired power stations are in operation worldwide, with a further 211 under construction, mostly in Asia. Earlier this year the Government released its *Strategic Statement On Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW*, which states:

Under some scenarios, this could see the global demand for thermal coal sustained for the next two decades or more.

My question to those who propose that New South Wales exits or pursues a faster phasing out of coalmining in the pursuit of their Green-Left agenda is: What do you hope to achieve? Despite it being our largest export in dollar terms by a large margin, our coal still only accounts for 3 per cent of total global consumption. Other countries would rapidly fill the void in demand and worldwide supply would be unaffected. We would be left with tens of thousands of unemployed people in New South Wales, a reduced standard of living and a depleted State budget. We would be cutting off our nose to virtue-signal our face. We must remain focused on the provision of secure, reliable and affordable power, whether it is to keep our lights on and our fridges and freezers running at home or whether it is to ensure that our workplaces keep functioning day in day out without fail. We should never lose sight of that key ingredient in our economy and in our society. We must not throw out our State's ability to provide such a basic necessity to appease a loud and privileged section of society, which demands virtue signalling over maintaining and improving the quality of life for all in our State and our country.

It is exciting to hear more about the emergence of hydrogen economy, which could be a very bright future. Japan and South Korea are among many countries asking Australia to gear up to provide this zero emission carrier of energy. Through its various universities and business ventures Australia is leading the charge in the space. The University of Newcastle is moving ahead in investing in this technology. I was recently joined by Senator Hon. Hollie Hughes and the Legislative Assembly Government Whip, Adam Crouch, MP, to discuss and view a demonstration of the standalone fuelling technology being developed by the university in conjunction with the Red Bus company, which is based in Bateau Bay on the Central Coast. All I can say is: Watch this space!

It was great to hear the speech given by the Federal energy Minister, the Hon. Angus Taylor, MP, to the National Press Club yesterday on the national Technology Investment Roadmap. This plots out a sensible and responsible methodology to ramp up Australia's investment in various low or zero emissions technologies such as hydrogen and many others. The statement future of coal released by the New South Wales Government in June 2020 sets out its plan of action to meet the future demand for coal. Firstly, we are improving certainty about where coalmining should not occur. The Government is clearly identifying areas where higher priority land uses mean that coal exploration and mining cannot occur. It has released mapping showing areas that would be ruled out for further coal exploration or mining.

Secondly, the New South Wales Government is undertaking reforms to the planning system. Some of these will provide greater certainty for coalmining proponents and the broader community. This includes amending the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to prohibit approval conditions relating to exports. Implementation of the findings of the recent review of the Independent Planning Commission will also improve certainty for proponents of major projects. Thirdly, we are reducing the impact of coalmining. The operating and regulatory standards for New South Wales coalmines have been significantly improved in recent decades. This has delivered better environmental, social and economic outcomes. However, constant innovation in the industry means that there are always places to further reduce impacts.

The New South Wales Government will continue to strengthen regional economies through the development and implementation of location-specific plans to diversify those areas which are heavily dependent on coalmining. There will be regional variations in the profile of coal production. Some areas will see a gradual decline over the next few years while others could see increased coal production in the short to medium term. We will adopt a systematic, place-based approach to transition planning, starting with the regions that are expected to experience the earliest coal production declines and the upper Hunter region, given the importance of its coal industry to its economy.

The policies of those opposite have thankfully been rejected and it is the New South Wales and Commonwealth Coalition governments that are responsible for navigating the path forward. On the one hand we have developed countries transitioning away from coal towards cleaner energy sources. On the other, we have developing countries that are racing to meet the demand for access to electricity for their citizens as they pull them out of poverty. The New South Wales Government's responsible approach is supporting investment certainty as the coal industry is responding to global demand and also while assisting communities to manage a decline in thermal coalmining over the longer term. This is the balance that recognises that the global transition to low carbon energy sources is already underway in developed countries and it gives coal-reliant communities time to adapt. The choice is clear. Labor and The Greens and inner-city types are telling us what we can and cannot have. They are telling us what they want to ban versus the sensible and reasonable policy being presented by State and Federal Coalition governments that is giving us choices and innovation into the future. I commend the motion to the House.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (15:56:44):** Labor supports the motion although we do have an amendment. It was disappointing to hear the contribution from the Hon. Taylor Martin because NSW Labor has always supported a strong, safe, sustainable, responsible and well-regulated mining industry in this State. The honourable member moving the motion has implied that any suggestion to the contrary is to be rejected. Labor recognises that coalmining will continue to play a role in steel production and exports for many decades to come. Regarding electricity generation, demand for thermal and metallurgical coal in New South Wales and internationally will change over time as existing coal-fired power stations come to the end of their asset life and as technologies are developed allowing the production of low carbon steel.

Labor acknowledges the important role that coal will play in providing reliable and secure power to homes and industry for decades. Today it continues to provide around 80 per cent of our electricity. But every piece of machinery comes to the end of its life. As our fleet of coal-fired power stations come to the end of their lives, the challenge for policymakers is how to ensure that our State has an affordable, secure and reliable supply of energy in the years to come. The best advice is that the most affordable form of new-build energy generation is renewables backed by appropriate levels of storage. It just happens that it is also the cleanest and best for the environment, but it is also cheaper. If you are into cheaper energy for industry to drive job creation and allow households to lift the burden of the cost of living, then you will support the transition to renewable energy for our domestic power needs. This is not ideology.

The mover of the motion has tried to get into the fringe war that has held this country back for more than a decade. The solutions are well known to industry that increasingly supports a net zero carbon future by 2050. The current Government and members opposite claim that is their policy frame and Labor also supports that objective. But too often politics has gotten in the way. And who pays the price? Those communities currently dependent upon coal for their economic wellbeing.

The challenge that all of us faces is to make the change and ensure that it provides jobs and opportunities for New South Wales and its people. That is not the substance of the motion before us today. The motion deals with a range of factual propositions that cannot be debated. The second part of the motion is the obvious recognition that, given that the lion's share of the coal this State produces is for export, it will continue to play a role in supporting the electricity needs of other nations as well.

For more than a century, NSW Labor has stood with miners and mining communities. We have supported them to improve safety, wages and other conditions of employment and supported the communities where they live. We will continue to stand with them and their communities and back improvements and safety regimes, and oppose the greater use of casual and other vulnerable or non-permanent work forms in the mining industry. The number of contract staff working in coalmines continues to increase. Some of those contract staff are on good agreements, while others work side by side with directly employed miners who are paid significantly more to effectively do the same job. An example of this is recent changes to the contract miner arrangements at the Appin mine operated by South32. Industrial relations arrangements that mean miners undertake the same job on different wages and conditions are fundamentally wrong. We certainly believe that if someone is doing the same job, they should essentially get the same pay and conditions.

This is why Labor has committed to use planning approval processes to require mining companies demonstrate that they have fair settlement procedures, to ensure that at least 80 per cent of workers on site are directly employed and to ensure that labour hire workers have the same pay and conditions as directly employed workers performing the same or similar work. In addition, NSW Labor believes that the State needs to do more to support miners as mine operations incorporate more technology and automation. I note that the mining industry in other States has a higher level of automation than New South Wales currently; nevertheless, automation is on its way and that is always a present threat to employment. As existing mines move towards greater automation, mining companies need to be required to complete a new local jobs test, which Labor proposed earlier this year.

This would require companies to develop and implement a transparent local jobs impact statement on any proposed automation in mines. That must include consultation with the workforce, the unions and community representatives to meet a "no net job loss" test at the mine as a result of automation and include additional training for existing employees and any transitional arrangements so that they can retrain into new roles at the existing mine site. Companies must also locate control rooms and technical facilities associated with automated operations at the existing site or its immediate locality. NSW Labor has developed these proposals to make sure that the State's mines continue to employ workers and the industry continues to earn its social licence. Nothing is more guaranteed to destroy its social licence than bad employment practices and robbing local communities of the full benefit of the work that it can provide.

NSW Labor recognises that the last few months of managing and adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic has proved as difficult for the resources sector as it has for the rest of the economy. We have welcomed the efforts of mining companies and mining unions working together to develop safe and effective means through which mines can continue to operate, keep people employed and support regional economies. Coalmining is part of the lifeblood of economies and regions like the Hunter and the Illawarra. It helps people put food on the table, pay the mortgage and bills, and supports families and communities. Labor will continue to pursue policies to address the impacts of climate change and the need to transition our energy supply to clean and cheaper renewables. But we will not sacrifice coal-dependent communities in order to achieve this goal as the Berejiklian Government appears content to do. It is ignoring the challenge and opportunities that grasping the possibilities of the clean energy future can bring in terms of investment, jobs and wellbeing for the broader community and individuals directly employed in it.

New South Wales needs to diversify its industry so that it is prepared for a future where its energy is coming from different sources. It does not have to be at the expense of the domestic coalmining industry. New and traditional industries must work together to help address the social, economic and environmental challenges that we face. I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting at the end:

- (3) That this House supports labour hire workers in coalmines in New South Wales having the same pay and conditions as directly employed workers performing the same or similar work.
- (4) That this House supports the location of control rooms and technical facilities associated with automated mining operations being located at the existing site or its immediate locality.

This amendment makes good on the arguments that I just outlined. We are about supporting coalminers and their communities in meaningful work in the industries and the locations in New South Wales where mining takes place. I challenge the Hon. Taylor Martin and Government members: If they are for the workers as they claim to be, if they are truly concerned about job security and economic security, wellbeing and prosperity for the Illawarra,

the Hunter and other regions, including the Central West, which are dependent on mining and mining jobs, they will support these amendments. Otherwise, they are hypocrites who are just trying to engage in wedge politics to create a problem for my side of politics. In his contribution the Hon. Martin Taylor talked about "those opposite" having their policies rejected. The honourable member forgets that when we look at what his Government claims it is doing—and I say "claims" because frankly it is not delivering—a lot of that is the same policy set that we took to the last election.

The difficulty for the honourable member is that when we say that we are into a clean energy future, we mean it. His side of politics does not. More to the point, we do support coalminers. We know that there is dignity in work. We know coalmining communities do not go to work to damage the environment. They go to work to support their families and communities and to keep them thriving. We respect the dignity of work. We respect what they do. My party came in large part from these communities and we keep faith with them. The difference is that we know the economy is changing. We know that there has been a shift over the past 10, 20 and 30 years from direct employment to fragile and vulnerable work—contract, labour hire, sessional and gig work—where there is no security. People in a dangerous industry, which coalmining can be, work side by side on vastly disparate pay and conditions, where one person has—to the extent that anybody does in the current economy—some degree of permanence and security, and the person working beside them has none. They can be dispensed with at an hour's or a shift's notice.

What does that do? It undermines the standards that the workforces in those communities have fought hard for. It also undermines the health and safety regime, which is very rigorous in the New South Wales coalmining sector but is always at risk. Where workers are insecure and know that they can be dispensed with at the next shift if they rock the boat or raise an issue, they will not raise those safety issues. They will not raise those health problems. These will go unaddressed and put the rest of the workforce at risk. However workers are styled, if they do the same or similar work, they should get the same pay and conditions. That is something that the Government should agree with us on if it is serious, as it claims, about supporting coalminers, their families and communities and providing them with economic security. That is the challenge I lay down for the Hon. Taylor Martin and his Coalition colleagues. Let us see if they rise to the pitch of the ball, but I doubt they will.

**Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (16:08:40):** I support the motion moved by the Hon. Taylor Martin. I thank him for his diligence in ensuring that this important issue involving the coalmining industry in New South Wales is brought to the attention of the House. I am very pleased to support it. Over my 30 or 40 years I have supported many of the coalminers where there have been protests and strikes. I have inspected coalmines in New South Wales, especially longwall coalmining. It is quite frightening to be down in the mine with the miners, with coal dust everywhere as those walls were excavated and allowed to collapse to get coal. Then the wall of coal would be transferred from the mine on mobile carrier trucks to the open air. Those miners were covered in black coal dust as it filled the mine. It is very unhealthy for the miners. I admire the men who work in those conditions.

The Hon. Taylor Martin reminded us in his motion that over 28,600 people are employed directly in the New South Wales coal industry. In 2018 a total of 164.6 million tonnes of coal was exported from New South Wales. Some 85 per cent of the coal mined in New South Wales is exported, mainly to Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan, where it is mostly used for electricity generation. Coal exports in New South Wales represent only 3 per cent of the global coal consumption. In 2018-19 coal brought in around \$2 billion in royalties revenues in New South Wales, which was used to fund the public services and infrastructure. I fully support paragraph (2):

That this House recognises that coalmining for export in New South Wales will continue to play a role in supporting other nations to provide electricity access for their citizens into the future.

The point that the Leader of the Opposition made about the closure of some of the out-of-date electricity power stations powered by coal is a reminder that those out-of-date power stations should all be replaced. We should not wait until they are all closed down and there is no electricity in New South Wales. There should be a plan to replace those out-of-date power stations as urgently as possible. I am pleased to support the motion.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Documents*

### **LIDDELL TASKFORCE**

#### **Production of Documents: Order**

**Mr JUSTIN FIELD:** I move:

That private members' business item No. 477 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

**Motion agreed to.**